

Amendments to the Specification

The first paragraph of page 4 is hereby amended as follows:

The acid component of the composition is selected from the group consisting of 1) a sulfuric acid, 2) a fluorosulfonic acid, 3) a perhaloalkylsulfonic acid, 4) an ionic liquid, 5) mixtures of Bronsted acids and Lewis acids, and 6) combinations of any two or more thereof. Preferably, the ~~base~~ acid component is a perhaloalkylsulfonic acid. Most preferably, the ~~base~~ acid component is trifluoromethanesulfonic acid.

The third full paragraph of page 5 is hereby amended as follows:

Preferably, the mixtures of Bronsted acids and Lewis acids comprise, consist of, or consist essentially of, a Bronsted acid selected from the group consisting of hydrofluoric acid, sulfuric acid, trifluoromethanesulfonic acid, and combinations of any two or more thereof and any suitable Lewis acid, including, but not limited to, halides of Group IIIA metals such as BF_3 , AlCl_3 , GaCl_3 , and other metal halides such as TiF_4 TiF_4 .